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ABSTRACT

The most crucial findings resulting from this survey of 1,256 women are those reflecting the respondents' needs and concerns, as well as their views of what should be priorities for program planning. The problem areas which these women generally agreed should be of importance were employment, wife abuse, rape and other sexual offenses, child care, and education. Additional areas which were emphasized were job re-entry counseling and wills/probate. An example of the survey's implications for agency action is the current emphasis on employment, both in terms of conferences and seminars and in terms of direct services being offered to women. (BN)

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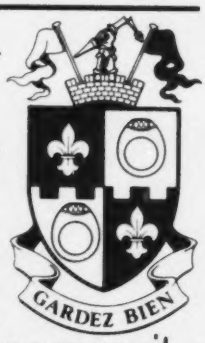

Making a County a Community

July 1, 1978

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REPORT ON THE

SURVEY OF COUNTY WOMEN

Prepared for

The Montgomery County Commission for Women

by

Sharon A. Shueman, Ph.D.

April 1978

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the Spring of 1977 the Montgomery County Commission for Women, (CFW), conducted a Survey of County Women. An anonymous questionnaire was mailed to 10,000 women chosen randomly from the Montgomery County voter registration rolls. Twelve hundred fifty-six women responded to the survey which solicited demographic information, data on needs and concerns of County women, and information on their familiarity with the Commission and its direct service resource and activity center, A Woman's Place.

Those women who responded to the survey differed on certain demographic characteristics from the population of women in the County, such as age, education, and occupation. The average level of education of respondents was higher and their occupations reflected this disparity. The respondent group was overly represented by women in the 30-35 age group and under represented with respect to the very young (18-24) and the very old (65+).

Factors possibly related to these differences were the method of sample selection (registered voters as a group tend to be more socioeconomically advantaged than the total population) as well as the fact that respondents had to supply return postage for the questionnaire. Because of differences between the sample and the population, generalizations about survey results are made with caution.

According to the survey data, approximately 54% of those responding had heard of either the Commission (CFW) or A Woman's Place (AWP)

Those women not knowing about the agency tended again, to be the oldest and the youngest and the less well educated, as well as the widowed, and the

never married. Sixty-eight women, or 5.4% of the respondents, had used the services of CFW/AWP. The agency services used by these women (in order of frequency of use) were: Information (approximately 68% reported this use), Referrals (25.0%), Publications (25%), Public Seminars (23.5%), Courses (14.5), Counseling (10.3%), and Other (8.8%).

Those problem areas which women generally agreed should be of importance to CFW were 1-Employment (most often ranked as the most important), 2-Abused Wives, 3-Rape/Sexual Offenses, 4-Child Care and 5-Education. An additional area which was emphasized by those women who had used CFW/AWP was that of Job Re-entry Counseling.

The area of legal concern shared by the largest percentage of the women was Wills/Probate. Relatively large expressions of concern were in the additional areas of Discrimination in Credit, Discrimination in Employment, Divorce and Legal Separation, and Alimony/Child Support.

Items soliciting experience and satisfaction with adult education and college courses indicated that by far the largest percentages of women took courses through the County Adult Education and the County Recreation Department programs. These women reported being generally satisfied with their course experiences.

The survey yielded major conclusions with implications for agency action. The first is that present agency efforts are in directions in which needs or priorities were expressed. A good example of this is the current emphasis being placed on employment, both in terms of conferences and seminars and in terms of direct services being offered.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE REPORT

The Montgomery County Commission for Women is a five-year-old organization which seeks to improve women's economic, educational and legal status through lobbying, public information and coordinating efforts. In addition, the Commission provides direct service programs through A Woman's Place. In the Spring and Summer of 1977 the Commission conducted a Survey of County Women, the goal being to gather information which would be useful both in assessing the needs of women and in making decisions regarding allocation of Commission resources. This report presents the results of that survey.

The goal of this report is to present data in such a way as to maximize their usefulness to the Commission in future programming aimed at meeting the needs of County women (i.e., for decision-making purposes). In addition, it represents an attempt, although a somewhat non-rigorous one, at providing some index of the present efficacy of the Commission in meeting its stated objectives. In this sense the survey instrument used in data gathering may be considered an evaluation device.

It was the decision-oriented nature of this study, together with the skewed nature of the sample of women actually reached, which led to the use of descriptive and not inferential statistics in the analysis of data. Thus, what is presented in this report are summary data in the form of frequency counts, percentages, ranks, and means. For the reasons stated above, statistical tests of significance - procedures designed to allow meaningful generalizations from representative sample statistics to population parameters -- are not reported.

THE SURVEY

The Commission for Women was awarded funding for the Survey of County Women in July of 1976. Mailing of the questionnaire to 10,000 women, who were randomly chosen from the Montgomery County voter registration rolls, was done between February and May of 1977.

The Questionnaire

A copy of the survey questionnaire is contained in Appendix A, page 36. The instrument consisted of three types of items: all but two of the 18 items required the respondent to indicate her answer choice by checking one or more options; one item required the respondent to indicate her preferences by ranking a set of alternatives; the last item on the questionnaire was "open-ended," i.e., respondents were asked to elaborate, using their own words, on any of their previous responses and on ways in which the Commission for Women could better serve them. The questionnaire was designed so that it would take the average respondent no longer than 15 minutes to complete. It was a mail-in survey, and return postage was provided by respondents. All responses were anonymous.

Data solicited included demographic information such as age, education, occupation, income, marital status, and number of dependents, as well as information relevant to the needs and problems of the women. The respondents were also questioned regarding familiarity with and use of the CFW/AWP.

While the CFW works with issues of systemic change in large organizations, it also provides, through AWP, direct service by coordinating with other agencies and providing counseling, on-going groups, educational and issue oriented programs, clinics and workshops. Both programs are county supported and operate out of the same office.

Response to the Survey

Of the 10,000 surveys originally sent out 928 or 9.3% were returned undeliverable; 1,256 or 12.6% of those sent out and 13.8% of those delivered were returned and are included in the data analysis.

While 12.6% is a lower percentage than is desirable in such a survey, 1,256 is, in absolute terms, a sufficiently large sample from which generalizations can safely be made to the appropriate population. Consideration must be given, however, to defining this "appropriate" population. In this case what must be asked is to what extent views expressed by the survey sample are representative of the views of all women in Montgomery County (the population).

The Question of Representativeness

In order to assess the question "How representative is the sample of the population?" two factors must be considered: sample size and similarity (on relevant variables) of the sample to the population.

The first factor is that of sample size. Assuming adequate similarity of sample to population, the larger the sample the greater is the degree of confidence that the responses of those in the sample describe those of the population; hence, inferences about the population may be justified. In this case, while the percentage of County women receiving the questionnaire who actually returned them was small, nonetheless the actual number of questionnaires available for data analysis was large.

The second factor is more problematic in the survey. What must be assessed is how similar the relevant characteristics of the respondents are to those of the population of women in Montgomery County. For example, if 15% of the women in the County are between the ages of 30 and 35 it is desirable

to have an approximately similar percentage of respondents in the same age range. In this regard the percentage of surveyed individuals who did not respond to the Survey of County Women is quite important. For example, let us suppose that there was something inherent in the survey process or instrument which prompted certain groups or types of women not to return it: The questionnaire may have been too long (probably not true); or they may have been discouraged by the fact that they had to supply their own return postage (probably true). Either of these or other factors may have prevented certain types of women from responding and being included in the survey. It is possible, for instance, that women with low incomes may have been less willing to provide their own postage. If true, it would mean that women of low socio-economic status would be underrepresented in such a survey and accordingly, that their attitudes would not be adequately reflected by the data collected.

Evidence bearing on the issue of representativeness was derived by the population of County women in terms of available relevant demographic variables. The representativeness of the sample is dicussed in a later section on "Sample Characteristics." It will be stated in advance, however, that the evidence suggests the sample differs in a number of ways from the population of women in Montgomery County.

The section on sample characteristics contains information crucial to those attempting to make generalizations or set policy based on the survey results. It may be of little interest, however, to the casual reader. For this reason this report presents the substantive survey results first, followed by the section on sample characteristics.

WHAT THE SURVEY TELLS US

Respondents' Views on Programmatic Emphasis

The most crucial data for the Commission for Women/A Woman's Place are those reflecting both the respondents' needs and concerns as well as their views of what should be priorities for program planning. This section summarizes these data.

Item 1 on the survey questionnaire asked respondents to choose the five of 18 listed problem areas (17 specific categories plus "other, please specify") which they believed should be of major importance to the Commission for Women. They were asked to rank the chosen areas from 1 (most important) to 5. It should be noted that, while we might make implications in this case about what the needs of Montgomery County women are, it should be clear that this item is not necessarily reflecting needs. It is merely a reflection of respondents' views concerning which areas are most appropriate for resource allocation; this ma be quite different from what their personal needs or concerns are.

Table 1, page 7, summarizes in three different ways the responses to this item. Listed in the first two columns are the percentages of respondents in both the whole sample and the user sample (those who had used CFW/AWP services) who gave each problem area a "first priority" (most important) ranking. Columns 3 and 4 give the percentage of respondents in each sample group giving each problem area some priority (1 through 5). Finally, columns 5 and 6 include, for both groups, "rank sums" for each of the problem areas. Rank sum was computed for each problem area by assigning it a value of 5 every time it was ranked as a first priority, a value of 4 every time it was ranked as second in importance, etc.; these values were then summed over all respondents for a total rank sum. This method gives an alternative indication of relative importance of these prob-

lem areas. The rank sum for a problem area was designed to reflect the overall salience of an item which might receive very few ranks of 1, but would be ranked as some priority (2-5), and therefore considered important, by a large number of individuals.

Results

There are five problem areas which consistently appeared in the high ranks for all respondents in the larger sample. In order these areas are: 1-Employment 2-Abused Wives, 3-Rape and Sexual Offenses, 4-Child Care, and 5-Education. Employment had the largest percentage of first priorities, it had the highest rank sum, and was tied with Rape/Sexual Offenses for the largest percentage of some priority.

Results for the sample of users of CFW/AWP are also included in Table 1. For this smaller group there was less consistency across the three means of summarizing data, although Employment and Abused Wives both ranked high for these women in all three summaries. Other areas given importance by this smaller sample were: Child Care, Domestic Relations Law, Education, Legal Services, and Rape and Other Sexual Offenses. The one area which was clearly the most important in the views of these women was Job Re-entry Counseling. This got relatively low importance ranking from the larger sample but for the users it had the highest percentage of "some priority", the highest rank sum, and tied with Employment for the highest percentage of "first priority" ranks.

These results yield eloquent testimony for both the importance and the timeliness of the Commission's recent venture: the establishment of New Phase. New Phase is a CETA funded "Career Readiness Center for Women" which exists to provide career readiness skills for target groups such as re-entry women and displaced homemakers.

TABLE 1

Priority Rankings and Rank Sums*
for Problem Areas Listed on
Survey of County Women

Problem Area	% First Priority		% Some Priority		Rank Sum[a]	
	All Respondents (N=1258)	Users (N=68)	All Respondents	Users	All Respondents	Users
Abused Wives	12.0 (2)*	13.2 (3)	36.7 (4)	48.5(2)	2167(3)	95(3)
Alcoholism	5.2	5.9	24.4	14.7	1269	29
Career Planning	5.9	4.4	22.0	26.5	1177	52
Child Care	10.4 (4)	5.9	40.8 (3)	32.4	2166(4)	76(4)
Consumer Credit Practices	3.8	1.5	30.0	27.9	1216	36
Domestic Relations Law	2.9	7.4 (4)	17.4	39.7(4)	824	74
Drug Abuse	4.5	1.5	17.6	5.9	906	8
Education	10.8 (5)	5.9	36.7 (4)	25.0	1983(5)	53
Employment	12.5 (1)	14.7 (1)	44.0 (1)	44.1(3)	2424(1)	100(2)
Family Planning	3.4	2.9	20.4	13.2	992	30
Housing Discrimination	0.9	1.5	10.0	11.8	446	17
Insurance & Pension Plans	1.7	0.0	17.8	13.2	774	18
Job Re-entry Counseling*	6.7	14.7 (1)	33.7	54.4(1)	1690	120(1)
Legal Services	4.2	5.9 (5)	33.5	35.3(3)	1534	72(5)
Medical Care	4.1	0.0	24.4	19.1	1157	30
Rape/Sexual Offenses	11.5 (3)	5.9 (5)	44.0 (1)	29.4	2314(2)	59
Vocational Training	1.4	0.0	14.2	14.7	631	28
Other	1.7	2.9	0.0	10.3	259	19

[a]Note: See text page 5 for an explanation of rank sum.

*Column ranks of the first 5 problem areas.

These results also make sense when it is realized that the largest single category of clients who utilize AWP services, have domestic relations problems (usually separation and divorce) as their presenting problem. In 1976 out of 2,742 clients, 2,017 had domestic problems and 314 specific legal concerns. In 1977 out of 2,676 clients, 1,366 had domestic or family related problems.

Legal Concerns

Item 4 of the Survey asked the women to check the categories which "apply now, have applied, or are anticipated in terms of legal help you've needed or experienced." Table 2, page 9, lists these categories and the numbers and percentages of respondents checking each category.

The largest category of concerns was Wills/Probate (29.4% of respondents). This is a subject about which almost everyone must eventually make a decision, and in which many women, due to dependence on husbands who generally take care of these things, are often uninformed. The areas of Discrimination in Credit and Discrimination in Employment were concerns of a large percentage of respondents (19.5% and 16.8%, respectively). This would point out to the Commission the importance of their directing resources toward legislation and enforcement in these areas.

Divorce and Legal Separation was an area of concern of 14.5% of the women. In this regard problems may be personal (dealings with spouse, etc.) or a function of laws governing divorce and separation. The needs, then, may vary from finding a lawyer (in which case the AWP would be a resource for personal needs) to influencing the enforcement of or effecting change in the law (here the lobbying/testimony/legislative activities of the Commission become crucial).

The final area of concern listed by a significant number of women (8%) was Alimony/Child Support. As with Divorce and Legal Separation, this problem

TABLE 2

Legal Concerns of Respondents to the
Survey of County Women
(total N=1256)

Concern	N	%
Alimony/Child Support Collection	104	8.3
Criminal Charges	21	1.7
Discrimination in Credit	245	19.5
Discrimination in Employment	211	16.8
Discrimination in Housing	63	5.0
Disputes Between Persons	67	5.3
Divorce/Legal Separation	182	14.5
To Report and Prosecute a Sexual Offense	51	4.1
Wills/Probate	369	29.4
Other	1	0.1

area may require a dual approach of working both from a legislative perspective as well as endeavoring to be a resource for personal needs.

The other four categories of legal problems were each listed as concerns by approximately 5% or fewer of the respondents.

Here again it is interesting to note that the women who use CFW/AWP differ in their response from the general survey respondent. While Job Re-entry Counseling, Abused Wives and Employment were their first three priorities, Domestic Relations Law and Legal Services were 4 and 5. In the general non-user respondent these were ranked 14 and 7, respectively. This comparison points to the fact that CFW/AWP direct service clients are facing problems unique from the broader population (i.e., separation and divorce usually).

Adult Education in the County

Table 3, page 11, summarizes responses to items 2 and 3 of the Survey, which asked women whether and where they had taken courses in Montgomery County; it also asked, of those who took adult education courses anywhere in the county, how well those courses met their needs.

The results reflected the popularity in the County of Adult Education and Recreation Department education programs; 40.4% and 32.9% of women in the survey sample reported taking courses offered through either Adult Education or the Recreation Department, respectively. According to responses to item 3, 36.5% of the respondents who took adult education courses in the County indicated that the courses met their needs "well". These needs were "more than" met for 3.3% of the respondents; 17.2% had their needs met "somewhat"; and 2.3% did not believe the courses met their needs.

TABLE 3

Courses Taken in Montgomery County
by Survey Respondents
(Total N=1256)

Number of Courses Taken

Number	N	%
0	413	32.9
1	459	36.0
2	283	22.5
3	92	7.3
4	14	1.1
5	1	0.1

Where Taken

Institution	N	%
County Adult Education	503	40.0
County Recreation Department	413	32.9
Montgomery College	272	21.7
Montgomery College Continuing Education	64	4.9
Columbia Union College	9	0.7
Other	93	7.4

Did Program Meet Needs

	N	%
Did not meet needs	29	2.3
Met needs to some extent	216	17.2
Met needs well	459	36.5
More than met my needs	42	3.3

Montgomery College was the other institution utilized by a large percentage of these women (21.7%). Fewer women indicated having taken courses through Montgomery College Continuing Education (4.9%), Columbia Union College (.07%), or at some other institution (7.4%)

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

Included in this section is a description of the survey sample; where data availability made them possible, somewhat comparable descriptions of the population of women in Montgomery County are included.[1] Complete tables describing sample characteristics, including more detailed information than possible in this narrative, are included. These tables will be referred to frequently in the text. Census data tables are also included.

One might expect that the present sample of women, having been taken almost exclusively from voter registration rolls, would be overly representative of better-educated, upper income women. In fact, those in the survey are almost surprisingly well-educated with relatively high incomes. While the population of the County is, in general, of higher average socioeconomic status than that of the nation as a whole, the women in this survey sample are atypical even by County standards. A description of this sample follows.

Length of residence in the County

The average number of years' residence in the County for the respondents was approximately 16 years. The modal (most common) response to this item was three years, indicating a fairly high number of women who are relatively new to Montgomery County. This, however, should be noted in context of the generally transient nature of the population of the Washington metropolitan area.

[1]Data Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population : 1970, Volume 1, Characteristics of the Population, Part 22, Maryland. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973. While these data present the problem of timeliness, they are the most recent available

Age

The median age for the sample was approximately 41 years (40.7). This means that approximately half of the women were younger than 41 while approximately half were older. As can be seen from Table 4, page 15, the age groups of 18-29 and 30-39 each contain approximately 24% of the sample, while the 40-49, 50-59, and 60+ categories contain approximately 22%, 19%, and 12% of the sample, respectively.

In contrast are the data (also on Table 4) of the age distribution of all women, age 18 or older, in Montgomery County, according to the 1970 U.S. Census. The median age for the group was approximately 46 years. Of the total population of 176,782, 26.3% were between 18 and 29, 19.2% were between the ages of 30-39, and 22.0% between 40 and 49. The percentages in the 50-59 and 60+ categories were 15.6% and 16.7%, respectively.

The disparity between the sample and the population appears to be among the youngest and the oldest groups of women. While the sample contains 10.7% in the 18-24 age range and 7.4% in the 65+ category, the County statistics for those same age groups are 15.3% and 11.5%, respectively. In addition, while 14.2% of the sample are between 30 and 34, only 9.6% were reported in this age range in the 1970 Census. The sample, then, is underrepresentative of the oldest and youngest women, and over representative of women between the ages of 30 and 35.

Education

Those responding to the survey were, on the average, very well-educated, (see Table 5, page 17). Almost 98% of them had some education beyond high school. Twenty-four percent had a bachelor's degree, and over 99% were at least high school graduates. There are marked differences, however, between

TABLE 4

	Age Distribution of Montgomery County Women (Source: 1970 U.S. Census)		Age Distribution of Women Responding to Commission for Women Survey and of Sub-Sample of Women Having Used CFW/AWP			
	Census Data		All Respondents		Those Who Have Used CFW/AWP	
AGE	N	%	N	%	N	%
18-24	27,086	15.3	133	10.7	3	4.4
25-29	19,580	11.0	163	13.1	6	8.8
30-34	17,025	9.6	177	14.2	18	26.5
35-39	16,890	9.6	116	9.3	9	13.2
40-44	19,123	10.8	131	10.5	8	11.8
45-49	19,800	11.2	137	11.0	7	10.3
50-54	15,687	8.8	130	10.5	7	10.3
55-59	12,092	6.8	101	8.1	5	7.4
60-64	9,153	5.2	62	5.0	2	3.0
65+	20,346	11.5	92	7.4	3	4.4
Total Responding	176,782	*	1242	*	68	*
Median Age	46.1		40.7		38.7	

*Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding error

the educational levels of these women and those reported for County women in the 1970 Census.

According to the 1970 U.S. Census data, (see Table 6 page 18) County women age 25 or older, approximately 42% had some college education, with 23% having at least a bachelor's degree.

While there is a striking difference among the two sets of figures, this difference is moderated by two factors. The first is that the Census data, being over eight years old, might be expected to reflect fewer women pursuing or having pursued higher education. This is confounded by the second factor; that our survey sample, but not the Census sample, included women between the ages of 18 and 25. These individuals, being younger, may be more likely to be pursuing higher education. These two factors could have the effect of increasing (relative to the Census sample) the educational level of the survey sample. They almost certainly, however, fail to completely account for the difference.

Marital Status

A majority of the respondents were married: 61.4% for a subsequent time. Slightly more than 17% of the women were never married, 8.8% were divorced or separated at the time of the survey, and 5.2% were widowed.

Dependents

Although a large percentage of the women were married, approximately 48% reported having no dependents living at home; 17% had one dependent, 18% had two, and 17% reported three or more. It should be noted that there is some ambiguity in this item. It is possible that a woman could have children and still report having no dependents at home; i.e., she has adult children. See Table 8, page 20.

TABLE 5

Educational Level of Women Responding to Commission for Women Survey and of Sub-Sample of Women Having Used CFW/AWP

Highest Attained Level	All Respondents		Users of CFW/AWP	
	N	%	N	%
Elementary	5	0.4	0	0
Junior High	2	0.2	1	1.6
Attended High School	0	---	0	0
High School Graduate	19	1.6	0	0
Vocational Training	199	16.7	6	9.5
Attended College	33	2.8	2	3.2
College Graduate	300	25.2	14	22.2
Masters Degree	407	34.2	24	38.1
Doctoral Degree	195	16.4	13	20.6
Professional Degree	31	2.6	3	4.8
Total Responding	1191	*	63	*
High School Graduates	99.4		98.4	

*Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding error.

TABLE 6

Educational Level of Montgomery County Women
Age 25 Years or Older
(Source: U.S. Census 1970)

Years Education	N	%
None	1,083	0.7
1-4	1,531	1.0
5-7	6,059	4.0
8	6,748	4.5
9-11	16,488	11.0
12	54,901	36.7
College 1-3	23,658	19.1
College 4+	34,236	22.9
Total	149,704	
Median Years	12.8	
% High School Graduates	78.7	

TABLE 7

Marital Status of Women Responding to Commission for Women Survey and of Sub-Sample of Women Having Used CFW/AWP

	All Respondents		Users of CFW/AWP	
Status	N	%	N	%
Married, first marriage	773	62.0	42	61.7
Remarried	80	6.4	6	8.8
Single Never Married	216	17.3	9	13.2
Single, Divorced	77	6.2	3	4.4
Single, Separated	34	2.7	7	10.3
Single, Widowed	65	5.2	1	1.5
Total Responding	1245	*	68	*

TABLE 8

Number of Dependents of Women Responding to Commission for Women Survey and of Sub-Sample of Women Having Used CFW/AWP

	All Respondents		Users of CFW/AWP	
Number	N	%	N	%
0	603	48.0	23	33.8
1	214	17.0	12	17.6
2	227	18.1	13	19.1
3	115	9.2	14	20.6
4	59	4.7	6	8.8
5	26	2.1	0	0.0
6+	12	1.0	0	0.0
Total Responding	1256	*	68	*
Mean Number Dependents	1.2		1.5	

*Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding error.

Occupation

The occupations of the respondents were yet another reflection of the high level of education and training of the women in Montgomery County, in general, and in the survey, in particular. Almost 28% of the respondents were employed as professionals, with a rather high percentage of these women (53%) being nurses, teachers, social workers, or counselors. Over 10% classified themselves as administrators, while approximately 19% were technical or clerical and 27.9% were not employed outside the home. Only a small percentage (4.8%) were students and two individuals claimed to be unemployed.

As a point of comparison, also included in Table 9, page 22, are percentages employed in the various categories where these new percentages are computed after removal of the "homemaker" category. So, for instance, 25.6% of those women actually employed outside the home are employed in secretarial, clerical, or sales position; almost one-fourth (23.2%) are employed as teachers, nurses, social workers, or counselors.

While the above data on employment are not directly comparable to available Census data (categories are not identical), a breakdown of employment categories for all Montgomery County women 16 years and older is given in Table 10, page 23. (Note that the homemaker category is not included in the Census data).

As can be seen, over half (52.9%) of the women were employed in clerical and sales positions. At the same time 12.6% were employed as nurses, teachers and non-health professionals and technicians. A rather large percentage of the women (10.9%) were laborers, domestics, or service workers. This percentage is in stark contrast to 0% in corresponding categories in the survey sample.

TABLE 9

Occupations of Women Responding to Commission for Women Survey and of Sub-Sample of Women Having Used CFW/AWP

Occupation	All Respondents N	All Respondents %	All Respondents % Homemaker Category Removed	Users of CFW/AWP N	Users of CFW/AWP %	Users of CFW/AWP % Homemaker Category Removed
Professional with M.D., Ph.D., L.L.B.	43	3.4	5.5	4	6.4	9.8
Nurse, Teacher, Social Worker, Counselor	182	14.5	23.2	11	17.7	26.8
Other Professional (Clergy, Artist, etc.)	123	9.8	15.7	7	11.3	17.1
Manager, Administrator, Proprietor, Businessperson	131	10.4	16.7	8	12.9	19.5
Secretary, Clerical, Sales	208	16.6	26.5	5	8.1	12.2
Technician, Craftsperson	26	2.1	3.3	3	4.8	7.3
Homemaker	351	27.9	----	21	33.9	----
Student	60	4.8	7.6	3	4.8	7.3
Day laborer	0	0.0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0
Protective Services	0	0.0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0
Farm worker	10	0.8	1.3	0	0.0	0.0
Operative (e.g. bus, machinery)	0	0.0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0
Retired	0	0.0	0.0	0	0.0	0.0
Unemployed	2	0.2	0.3	0	0.0	0.0
Total Responding	1136		*	62		*

*Percentage may not total 100% due to rounding error

TABLE 10

Occupations of Women in Montgomery County
Age 16 Years and Older
(Source: 1970 U.S. Census)

Occupation	N	%
Professional and Technical (Nurses, Teachers, other health)	10,254	12.6
Other Professional	10,585	13.0
Non-Health Technicians	706	0.9
Managerial, Administrative	4,806	5.9
Sales, Clerical	43,178	52.9
Crafts and Kindred	862	1.0
Laborer, Domestic, Service	8,912	10.9
Protective	224	0.3
Farm	154	0.2
Operative	1,957	2.4
Total	81,638	

Training

The above figures concerning occupation arose in response to the Survey item 15: "Your current occupation." Item 16 asked the women whether they had been trained for any of those same categories of occupations. By and large the numbers of individuals trained for and actually engaged in any particular category correspond. A large difference occurs, however, in two areas: (1) While 182 women (14.5% of the sample) were employed as nurses, teachers, social workers, or counselors, 336 (26.8%) were trained for those occupations; (2) though only 1% of the sample reported being trained as a homemaker (and, by inference, not for any other occupation) the largest single occupational category engaged in was homemaking.

Income

Figures on income of self and spouse bear out the earlier assertion that both respondents of the survey and users of CFW/AWP have a relatively high economic status, though certainly not much above average income figures for the County. The estimate of median annual income for employed women in the County is $10,000 to $12,000 per year. From Table 11, page 26, we note that the largest single category of women respondents have no income at all (254). Subtracting that figure from the total, we have 897 women with some income. The median figure for them would fall in the $10,000 to 14,000 annual income bracket, about average for the County. In comparison the income figures from all respondents for their spouse, demonstrates a slightly higher than average median income (current median family income is 24,000 annually). The median for spouse in that category is in the $25,000 to $29,999 range.

For users of CFW/AWP, the median reported income for self is between $14,999 and $15,000 per year, about $5,000 per year higher than respondents or the County

average. For the spouse of users, the median income falls in the $25,000 and 29,999 again, only slightly higher than the County median and the same as for respondents.[1]

[1] Statistical Profile of Montgomery County, Maryland, 1975 Supplement, Dec. 1975. "Distribution of Family Income, Montgomery County", page 80.

TABLE 11

Income (Self and Spouse) of Women Responding to Commission for Women Survey and of Sub-Sample of Women Having Used CFW/AWP

	SELF			
	All Respondents		Users of CFW/AWP	
Income	N	%	N	%
None	254	22.1	15	24.2
0-4999	198	17.2	9	14.5
5000-9999	200	17.4	8	12.9
10,000-14,999	238	20.7	15	24.2
15,000-19,999	127	11.0	6	9.7
20,000-24,999	70	6.1	5	8.1
25,000-29,999	32	2.8	2	3.2
30,000+	32	2.8	2	3.2
Total Responding	1151		62	
	SPOUSE			
None	51	5.7	3	5.7
0-4999	16	1.8	0	0.0
5000-9999	28	3.1	0	0.0
10,000-14,999	84	9.4	2	3.8
15,000-19,999	127	14.2	8	15.1
20,000-24,999	146	16.3	11	20.8
25,000-29,999	107	11.9	7	13.2
30,000+	336	37.5	22	41.5
Total Responding	895	*	53	*

*Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding error.

Characteristics of CFW/AWP Users

An important question for any public or private service/resource agency is what types of individuals avail themselves of the agency services? This question may be addressed through an investigation of the characteristics of the women who reported having used the Commission for Women/A Woman's Place. The following is a summary of characteristics of that group.

Sixty-eight women, or 5.4% of those responding to the survey, reported having used CFW/AWP. Tables 1 through 6 already presented, give the summary of characteristics of these women.

The median (middle) age for the group of women who have used either agency was 38.7 as compared to 40.7 for the total sample. The largest group in this "user" sample were in the 30-39 age range, where almost 40% of the women were reported. In contrast, of the total sample 23.5% were in this age range. Another large difference appeared in the 18-29 age range where only 13% of the user sample, but about 24% of the total sample fell.

A majority of the women (61.8%) who reported using CFW/AWP were married; this percentage approximates the percentage of married women in the total sample. A comparison of the two groups indicates that "separated" women appeared more frequently in the user sample than in the larger sample, while those in the "never married" category appeared more frequently in the larger sample. One might assume, then, either that women who utilize the CFW/AWP as resources for concerns related to ending a marriage, or (more obviously) prior to the initial break-up of a marriage, are more likely to have additional concerns considered appropriate for these services.

While the educational level of the total sample was quite high, that of those women who have used CFW/AWP was even more impressive. Almost 81% of these women hold at least a bachelor's degree, 58.7% have at least a masters degree and 20.6% have a Ph.D., LL.B., or M.D. Table 9, page 22, gives the occupational distribution of women in the user group. The high educational level is reflected in the women's occupations, with almost 54% of the users being professional women.

Those using the facilities have, on the average, more dependents than those in the total sample: a mean of 1.5 as opposed to 1.2 dependents. Approximately 34% of those in the user group but 48.0% of the women in the latter group had no dependents at home.

For What Were the CFW/AWP Used?

Of those 68 women who reported using the Commission for Women/A Woman's Place, a majority (67.6%) reported using it to get information. The following are the other categories of services and the percentages of women using those services (note: an individual could respond to more than one category, hence percentages total more than 100%): Referrals-25.0%; Publications-25.0%; Public Seminar - 23.5%; Courses-14.5%; Counseling-10.3%; Other-8.8%; and Grievance-7.4%.

It may be concluded, then, that (at least by the criterion of actual usage) the most important function of the CFW/AWP is that of a clearinghouse for information, publications and referrals, all three of which could be subsumed under the category of information.

Whom are the CFW/AWP Reaching?

In gauging the overall efficacy of a human service program such as the CFW/AWP, it is important that data be collected which indicate who is being reached

by the program.

With reference to this report, data are available to address this issue.

Of the 1,243 women who responded to items 6 and 7 on the survey (Have you ever heard of...?), 555 or 44.2% had never heard of the CFW/AWP; 28% had heard of only one of the two, and 25.7% had heard of both. As might be expected, most of the women who had heard of only one, had heard of the CFW rather than AWP (23.1% as opposed to 6.0%).

Characteristics of Women Familiar With CFW/AWP

Tables 12 through 14 present summary characteristics (age, education, and marital status) of those women in the sample who reported having heard of at least one of the programs. Table 12 gives the age distribution of these 678 (55.6% of those responding) women. A comparison of the two group distributions on table 4 indicates an underrepresentation of women in the smaller sample in the youngest (18-24) and oldest (65+) age groups; 6.7% and 5.8%, respectively, as opposed to 10.7% and 7.4% in the total sample. At the same time those in the 40-49 age range appeared to be somewhat overrepresented (26.3%, as opposed to 21.5% for the entire sample). This is probably a logical finding considering that the demands placed on the CFW/AWP are for services and information relative to issues that would be of more concern during the middle years (i.e., employment, abuse, child care, education, assault, separation, divorce etc.)

Another meaningful statistic is found in the third column of each of Tables 12 through 14. The number of individuals having heard of CFW/AWP is listed as a percentage of the total number of women in that category. So, for example, 133 of the 1,256 respondents were between the ages of 18 and 24, and 34.6% of these 133 had heard of at least one of the two programs. That same figure for

TABLE 12

Age Distribution for Respondents Having Heard of Either CFW or AWP

Age	N	%	As % of All Respondents*
18-24	46	6.7	34.6
25-29	88	12.8	54.0
30-34	107	15.6	60.4
35-39	65	9.4	56.0
40-44	93	13.5	71.0
45-49	88	12.8	64.2
50-54	76	11.0	58.5
55-59	52	7.6	51.5
60-64	33	4.8	53.2
65+	40	5.8	43.5
Total Responding	688		

*Number of respondents having heard of CFW/AWP, expressed as a percentage of total number of Survey respondents in that age category.

the 40-44 age group was 71.0, while for the 65+ group the percentage was 43.5. These data reinforce the conclusion that the oldest and the youngest women are not hearing about CFW/AWP.

Here again is a perfectly reasonable occurance, for reasons cited previously. Further it seems to point to the fact that women who are likely to seek out a service do so because of their own personal need and that the needs being addressed by the CFW/AWP are not those occuring to predominately older or younger populations.

It is also the case that there are a plethora of public and private county programs addressing the particular concerns of youth and elderly. It is reasonable to assume that these agencies would attract these populations more readily than would the CFW/AWP.

Tables 13 and 14 contain statistics on the educational level and marital status of those women who claim to have heard of either CFW or AWP or both of them. Table 12 indicates a general trend, i.e., that the higher the level of education the more likely a woman is to have heard of these services. One possible factor affecting this could be that the higher the level of education the more likely the individual is to read local newspapers, listen to newscasts, and utilize the public libraries where most CFW/AWP information is disseminated.

Table 13, summarizing marital status of the respondents, indicates an underrepresentation of the widowed and the never married. The widowed, of course, are likely to be many of the oldest women discussed above. They may be less likely to seek resources due to more stable life circumstances; they also may be less likely to be in settings (on the job, etc.) where others might mention these programs to them. Those in the never married category, because of this

TABLE 13

Education of Respondents Having Heard of Either CFW or AWP

Highest Attained Level	N	%	As % of All Respondents*
Elementary	1	**	20
Junior High	1	**	50
Attended H.S.	0	--	--
High School	10	1.5	52.6
Vocational Training	87	13.3	43.7
Attended College	19	2.9	57.6
College Graduate	160	24.5	53.3
Masters Degree	236	35.8	58.0
Doctoral Degree	120	18.3	61.5
Professional Degree	20	3.0	64.5
Total Responding	654		

*Number of respondents having heard of CFW/AWP, expressed as a total number of Survey respondents in that age category.

** less than 1%

TABLE 14

Marital Status of Respondents Having Heard of Either CFW or AWP

Marital Status	N	%	As % of All Respondents*
Married	440	64.0	56.9
Remarried	47	6.8	58.8
Never Married	101	14.7	46.8
Divorced	45	6.5	58.4
Separated	27	3.9	79.4
Widowed	28	4.1	43.1
Total Responding	668		

*Number of respondents having heard of CFW/AWP, expressed as a percentage of total number of Survey respondents in that age category.

status, do not have many of the reasons of other groups of women to seek help and advice (e.g., marital problems, alimony and other legal problems). They may, therefore, be less likely to seek out CFW/AWP or any other social service agency.

Conclusions

Generalizing from the results of the Survey of County Women, one is presented with the inescapable conclusion that the present programmatic emphasis of the Commission for Women is one which is addressing the expressed priorities (and by implication, the needs) of County women.

Employment was ranked as the highest suggested priority for the Commission by the 1,256 women responding to the survey. The smaller group of women who had used CFW/AWP ranked Job Re-entry Counseling as the area to which the Commission should allocate its resources. In fact, these needs are being addressed generally through present activities of the CFW/AWP and specifically through New Phase, the Commission's recent venture aimed at aiding groups such as re-entering women and displaced homemakers by providing them with preparation for employment.

The areas rated as two, Abused Wives and three, Rape/Sexual Offenses are currently being addressed by the County Government with the development of a Comprehensive Community Crisis Center, so that county resources are currently being directed in these areas. It is expected that a member of the CFW will serve on the Advisory Committee for the Crisis Center.

The fourth area of child care has been frequently addressed, both programmatically and in lobbying and information efforts. A member of the AWP staff has been helpful in assisting with the founding of a day care center in Rockville near the County offices.

Finally, the fifth priority, education, is one of the CFW's most visible areas. The CFW/AWP both present educational programs in the form of seminars, workshops, clinics, discussion groups and lobbying efforts. Commission members also spend a great deal of effort in educational activities through personal contacts and an active Speakers Bureau. As was mentioned earlier, the most use made of the CFW/AWP is for information, all of which has an educational emphasis.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY OF COUNTY WOMEN -

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
COMMISSION FOR WOMEN
150 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850
424-0727

Survey of County Women

The Montgomery County Commission for Women is interested in your thoughts on the needs and problems of women. Please assist us by filling out this questionnaire and returning it. There is space at the end for your comments. This is a self mailer; just fold so address is on the outside and staple or tape closed. Thank you.

1. Please give us your views as to which areas you believe should be of major importance to the Montgomery County Commission for Women.

Place a "1" by the area you consider most important. Then give us your second (2), third (3), fourth (4), and fifth (5) priorities. (Choose 5)

(1) ___ Abused wives
(2) ___ Alcoholism
(3) ___ Career planning
(4) ___ Child care
(5) ___ Consumer credit practices
(6) ___ Domestic relations law
(7) ___ Drug abuse
(8) ___ Education
(9) ___ Employment
(10) ___ Family planning
(11) ___ Housing discrimination
(12) ___ Insurance and pension plans
(13) ___ Job re-entry counseling
(14) ___ Legal services
(15) ___ Medical care
(16) ___ Rape and other sexual offenses
(17) ___ Vocational training
(18) ___ Other. Please specify.
_____
_____

2. Have you taken courses in Montgomery County? If so, please specify where. (Check all that apply)

(19) ___ Montgomery County Public School Adult Education
(20) ___ Recreation Department
(21) ___ Montgomery College
(22) ___ Montgomery College Continuing Education
(23) ___ Columbia Union College
(24) ___ Other. Please specify. _____
_____

3. If you have taken an adult education program listed above, please evaluate how well the program met your needs (check one)

(25)
1. ___ Did not meet my needs
2. ___ Met my needs to some extent
3. ___ Met my needs well
4. ___ More than met my needs

4. Legal concern: Check all blanks which apply now, have applied, or are anticipated in terms of legal help you've needed or experienced (check all that apply)

(26) ___ Alimony/child-support collection
(27) ___ Criminal charges
(28) ___ Discrimination in credit
(29) ___ Discrimination in employment

(30) ___ Discrimination in Housing
(31) ___ Disputes between persons
(32) ___ Divorce/legal separation
(33) ___ To report and prosecute a sexual offense
(34) ___ Wills/probate
(35) ___ Other. Please specify. _____

5. **Have you ever heard of the Commission for Women? (Check one)**

(36) 1. ___ yes 2. ___ no

6. **Have you ever heard of A Woman's Place . . .? (Check one)**

(37) 1. ___ yes 2. ___ no

7. **Have you made use of either of them? (Check one)**

(38) 1. ___ yes 2. ___ no

8. **If yes, please specify how you used the Commission for Women or A Woman's Place (Check all that apply)**

(39) ___ Courses
(40) ___ Counseling
(41) ___ Referral
(42) ___ Information
(43) ___ Publications
(44) ___ Public Seminars
(45) ___ Grievance
(46) ___ Other. Please specify. _____

9. **Your age (Check one)**

(47) 1. ___ 18-24
2. ___ 25-29
3. ___ 30-34
4. ___ 35-39
5. ___ 40-44
6. ___ 45-49
7. ___ 50-54
8. ___ 55-59
9. ___ 60-64
10. ___ 65+

10. **Marital status (Check one)**

(48) 1. ___ Married, first marriage
2. ___ Remarried
3. ___ Single, never married
4. ___ Single, divorced
5. ___ Single, separated
6. ___ Single, widowed

11. **Highest Education (Check one)**

(49)
1. ___ Elementary
2. ___ Junior High
3. ___ Attended High School
4. ___ High School Graduate
5. ___ Vocational Training
6. ___ Attended College
7. ___ College Graduate
8. ___ Masters Degree
9. ___ Doctoral Degree
10. ___ Professional Degree

12. **Length of residence in county? (State number of years)**

(50-52) ___ years.

13. **How many dependents do you have living at home? (Write number)**

(53-54) ___ Males

(55-56) ___ Females

14. **Your income/income of husband (Check one under each heading)**

(57) You

1. ___ None
2. ___ 0-$4,999
3. ___ $5,000-9,999
4. ___ $10,000-14,999
5. ___ $15,000-19,999
6. ___ $20,000-24,999
7. ___ $25,000-29,999
8. ___ $30,000 or more

(58) Husband
1. ___ None
2. ___ 0-$4,999
3. ___ $5,000-9,999
4. ___ $10,000-14,999
5. ___ $15,000-19,999
6. ___ $20,000-24,999
7. ___ $25,000-29,999
8. ___ $30,000 or more

15. **Your current occupation (Check one)**

(59)
a. ___ Professional with M.D., Ph.D., LL.B.
b. ___ Nurse, teacher, social worker, counselor.
c. ___ Other professional (e.g. clergy, artist).
d. ___ Manager, administrator, proprietor, business person.
e. ___ Secretary, clerical, sales
f. ___ Technician, craftsperson
g. ___ Homemaker
h. ___ Student
i. ___ Day Laborer
j. ___ Protective Services

15. (59) Your current occupation (continued)

k.___ Farm Worker
l.___ Operative (e.g. bus, machinery)
m.___ Retired
n.___ Unemployed

16. Are you trained for any of the above? (Please specify by letter)

(60) ____

17. What is your zip code? (write number)

(61-65) # _____

18. Please elaborate further on any of your responses. How can the Commission for Women be helpful to you?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Stamp

COMMISSION FOR WOMEN
150 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850